

INTELLOFAK 8

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

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COUNTRY Siam

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SUBJECT The Political Situation

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SUPPLEMENT

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1. The present political unrest in Siam is a "war of nerves" which has as its basis the deep-seated struggle for control of the kingdom by royalists and the coup d'etat promoters. This struggle started exactly three days after the political prisoners, jailed at the time of the 1932 Coup d'Etat and during the Pibul regime, were released on orders from Pridi during Nai Khuang Abhaiwong's 1944 premiership. In three days, royalist sympathizers headed by M. R. Kukrit Pramoj, had lined up the prisoners and, playing upon their desire for revenge, banded them together into a political unit upon which the Progressive Party, nucleus of the Democratic Party, was built.
2. Some of these men, including Dr. Chote Khumpun, came to Pridi for help and sympathy which he extended to them. When one of them, Phya Sarasan (Washington note: probably Phya Suraphan Seni (In Bunnak)), was named to Pridi's Cabinet in 1946, he was "excommunicated" from the Democratic Party, proving that the Kukrit group had no real interest in cooperating for the welfare of the kingdom but merely wanted to stay together as a vengeance group.
3. The Sahachep Party was organized primarily to counteract the early activity of the Progressive Party. Nai Thong-In Phuriphat and Nai Tieng Sirikhan were given the job of building up the Sahachep Party.
4. During the Pibul regime none of the "post-war brave royalists" dared to participate in political activity and relied on Pridi to aid them, while paying lip service to Pibul. Particularly guilty of this was Prince Athit (Washington note: Prince Aditya) who was actually in league with Pibul in the hope that he might win the throne.
5. It was probably by playing on his ambitions as a royalist, derived from his Cambodian ancestry, that Nai Khuang Abhaiwong was induced by

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the Pramoj brothers [Washington note: Seni and Kukrit] to join the Democratic Party. Pridi argued at great length with Khuang, warning him that the royalists merely wanted to use Khuang's great personal following as a political weapon for their own ends.

6. With Pibul, their Number One enemy out of the way, the royalists set out methodically to attempt to dispose of Pridi. They knew they had to attack the two main pillars on which his power rested - the People's Party and the Free Thai. [Washington note: This has reference to the old People's Party which was dissolved some years ago.] All of their attacks are directed toward the destruction of Pridi's personal power.

7. Pridi decided to resign as Premier in 1946 because he heard of what the royalists had planned in the way of future attacks on him. [Washington note: The nature of these planned attacks was not revealed.] He had and still has "his men" among members of the Democratic Party and he always knows in advance what their plans are. For example, he knew well in advance of their plans to call a general debate and had little trouble keeping the matter under control.

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8. Pridi has "friends" among the royalists who keep him advised of their plans. These people are part of a group that he arranged to protect during the days of Pibul and the Japanese occupation. He personally planned a refuge at Bang Pa-in for the entire Royal Family and made arrangements for them to live there in safe seclusion in case the anti-Chakri sentiment of those days mounted to dangerous proportions. Some of the royalists still remember this work and are grateful, though most are not.
9. There are men today among both the coup d'etat promoters and the Free Thai who are "no good", but Siam's welfare is better in the hands of these two groups than any others in existence. Pridi has dedicated himself to making the coup d'etat something of real benefit to the Kingdom. It was inspired in good faith and it should be and is being carried on in the same spirit.
10. Pridi is personally convinced that anything he says or does publicly will be perverted by his enemies. For this reason, he feels it is better for him to work from behind the scenes. He stated that it would "probably be best at the present time if Luang Adul took over the Premiership". He paid homage to the courage and straightforwardness of Adul, citing his arrest of Prince Ransit of Chainat when he was Director General of Police during Pibul's regime.

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[redacted] Pridi seemed in much better humor and much more healthy than at any time in recent months. He expressed great confidence in the present political position of his group.)

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